



DRB Memorandum 429-433 Great Road

Project Location: Site of the existing Pegasus Tack Shop

Project Description: A one story retail car dealership consisting of an eight bay vehicle service area, showroom and support facilities.

Architectural Plans: The proponent presented 1. A revised architectural floor plan, sheet A-1 titled: Ground Floor Plan, Wall Section at Storefront and 2. Revised exterior architectural elevations, sheet A-2, titled: Exterior Elevations, Roof Plan, Entrance Sign. Each sheet presented lists a second revision date of May 26, 2015.

Property Owner and Proponent: Leo Bertolami – In attendance

Architect: E.J. Rempelakis Associates (Manny Rempelakis, R.A.) – In attendance

Civil Engineer: Stamski and McNary (George Dimakarakos, P.E.) – Not present

Date of DRB Second Review for this project proposal: 05-27-2015

The DRB, upon review of the revisions to the proposed project, notes the following:

Proponent's introduction:

- The site borders existing apartment buildings and adjacent retail uses on Great Road. The existing building is a wood frame, barn type structure with condition problems. The building is not located in an historic district nor is it located on the Acton Cultural Resource List as a protected structure. Therefore demolition of the existing building is allowed. The proponent will be seeking a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). The existing building violates a 30 foot setback from Great Road and the proponent will be seeking to replace the existing building with a new structure that does not conform with the required setback.

Site Plan:

- A modest change has been proposed to the arrangement of the building on the site, as compared to the proposal first reviewed by this board, to allow for a minor modification to the building layout. No site plan information was presented during this second review.

The DRB has no further comment to offer concerning the proposed site layout.

Floor Plan:

- As before, the floor plan depicts a one story flat roofed showroom building portion with support facilities parallel to Great Road. The vehicle service area is a double height gabled building portion positioned to the rear of the showroom that is shaped to conform to the maximum available footprint allowed on the site. The floor plan has been modified to slightly, (16"), offset the two story building volume from the one story portion. There will be two pedestrian entrances into the showroom; one along the Great Road sidewalk close to the northwest corner of the showroom and one oriented to the parking area on the north side of the showroom. The floor plan at the north facing pedestrian entrance has been accentuated by the proposed addition of a porch structure.

DRB comments:

1. The shift of the building volumes to establish the 16" offset does create a shadow line separation of the two differently designed portions of the building. This represents a modest improvement to the combination of the building volumes.
2. The proponent has elected to emphasize the entrance facing the parking lot with an added porch element. The board is not comfortable with how the two relatively close in proximity entrances, placed within a relatively simple and consistent glass and block facade are visually treated quite differently

Exterior elevations:

- As before, the building is proposed to be constructed with two distinctly different building volumes. The showroom portion is a single story flat roofed volume that consists of a series of glazed storefront bays, each capped by a metal awning, that are each separated by modest split faced block piers. The proponent has lowered the glass storefront to the floor level within each bay, raised the height of the main entrance structure facing Great Road, and has added a modest gable roofed porch over the entrance facing the parking lot.
- The service bay portion of the building remains proposed as a two story gable roofed structure that is primarily a solid faced block exterior punctured by modest windows high on each of its several sides and by garage door openings. The cornice line of the flat roofed portion has been aligned with the spring point height for the gable roof over the repair bays.

DRB Comments:

1. The board acknowledges that the alignment of the cornice lines and the lowering of the glass within the showroom glazed storefront bays are each improvements that were suggested during the initial project review.
2. The two relatively proximate pedestrian entrances to the showroom are in concept a logical placement for public access. The board believes, however, that the stucco and column supported visual treatment of these entrance structures should be rethought given the design elements proposed to accentuate the entrances are inconsistent with each other and formally not consistent with the other primary visual elements which are of an industrial aesthetic, specifically the use of split faced block, glazed aluminum storefront, and standing seamed roof elements.
3. The board is troubled that the two distinct building portions appear to have been designed without a lot of thought given to the integration of the whole. The use of a large gabled roof over the taller car repair volume, perhaps referencing a barn structure, seems appropriate. Board members wonder whether some portion of the lower flat roofed showroom building portion can incorporate a gabled roof element. Such a modification would help to tie the two building portions visually and, for example, if placed at the northwest corner of the showroom, would serve to accentuate the pedestrian entrances. A gabled roof above each pedestrian entrance would identify this as a more important corner of the showroom portion of the building and would offer valuable wall surface opportunities to mount building signage more gracefully than the presently proposed bulkhead structures.
4. Given a tenant has not been identified; the board expects that this building's exterior will need to be revisited and significantly refined by the proponent once corporate branding is taken into consideration. The board would appreciate the opportunity to review future iterations of this proposed auto sales and service building should the project continue to move forward.

The DRB thanks the proponent's team for sharing the updated project development drawings for review.

Respectfully Submitted,

Design Review Board

Members in attendance: Holly Ben-Joseph, Peter Darlow, Michael Dube. Janet Adachi, BOS liaison.